



## GEORGIA STATE SENATE

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## FINAL REPORT OF THE SENATE STUDY COMMITTEE ON UNSHELTERED HOMELESSNESS (SR 659)

### Committee Members

**Senator Carden Summers, Chairman**  
*District 13*

**Senator Gail Davenport**  
*District 44*

**Senator Mike Dugan**  
*District 30*

**Senator Kim Jackson**  
*District 41*

**Senator Randy Robertson**  
*District 29*

**Judge William "Beau" McClain**  
*Superior Court of Douglas County*

**Mr. A.J. Robinson**  
*Central Atlanta Progress*

*Prepared by the Senate Research Office, 2022*

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## STUDY COMMITTEE CREATION, FOCUS, AND DUTIES

The Senate Study Committee on Unsheltered Homelessness was created by Senate Resolution 659 during the 2022 Legislative Session of the Georgia General Assembly.<sup>1</sup> The Study Committee was tasked with: (1) studying the increase in unsheltered homelessness in Georgia and its capital city, Atlanta; (2) assessing the evidence for the success or failure of different policies in reducing street homelessness; (3) soliciting input from neighborhood groups, police, homeless nonprofit organizations, affected businesses, drug rehabilitation and mental health groups, and municipal leaders; and (4) developing specific recommendations on the enforcement of bans on camping and sleeping in public spaces, new types of state and local contracts with homeless nonprofit organizations, and the necessity for new state laws dealing with homelessness.

Senator Carden Summers of the 13th served as Chairman of the Study Committee. The other Senate members were Senator Gail Davenport of the 44th, Senator Mike Dugan of the 30th, Senator Kim Jackson of the 41st, and Senator Randy Robertson of the 29th. Additional members appointed to the Study Committee included Judge William “Beau” McClain, Douglas County Superior Court, and Mr. A.J. Robinson, Central Atlanta Progress.

The Study Committee held three meetings in total. The meetings took place at the Georgia State Capitol on August 4, 2022, November 9, 2022, and November 23, 2022.

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<sup>1</sup> S.R. 659, <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/62745>.

## BACKGROUND

There are four main categories of homelessness: (1) chronic homelessness, which is when someone has been continuously homeless for over a year or has had at least four bouts of homelessness in the past three years; (2) episodic homelessness, which is when a person has been homeless at least three times in the past year; (3) transitional homelessness, which is the most common and exists when a person becomes homeless after facing a major life change or catastrophic event, such as losing a job or becoming ill; and (4) hidden homelessness, which is when people temporarily live with friends or family.<sup>2</sup>

People experiencing homelessness can be sheltered or unsheltered. Unsheltered homelessness exists when a person has “a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground.”<sup>3</sup>

HUD describes encampments as generally including: (1) a group of people that sleep outside at the same place for sustained periods of time; (2) the presence of physical structures, such as tents; (3) personal belongings; and (4) the existence of social support or a sense of community for those who live there.<sup>4</sup>

### Georgia

It is important to note that there are some gaps in data collection on homelessness the past few years due to the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, in January 2020, Georgia had approximately 10,234 people experiencing homelessness, with 864 consisting of family households, 764 being veterans, 504 being unaccompanied young people between the ages of 18 and 24, and 1,374 experiencing chronic homelessness.<sup>5</sup> The Council also reports data from public schools and states that 38,891 public school students in Georgia experienced homelessness at some point during the 2018-2019 school year, with 642 being unsheltered.<sup>6</sup>

### Atlanta

The Point in Time Count helps show progress in reducing homelessness. In Atlanta, this count showed positive results for years: leading up to 2020, there were half as many homeless people in Atlanta as there had been a decade before.<sup>7</sup> But in 2020, there was a 30 percent increase in the unsheltered homeless population at 939 people, the highest count of

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<sup>2</sup> Do You Know the Four Types of Homelessness? <https://opendoorsatl.org/do-you-know-the-four-types-of-homelessness/>.

<sup>3</sup> Unsheltered Homelessness and Homeless Encampments in 2019, <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/Unsheltered-Homelessness-and-Homeless-Encampments.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> Unsheltered Homelessness and Homeless Encampments in 2019.

<sup>5</sup> Georgia Homelessness Statistics, <https://www.usich.gov/homelessness-statistics/ga/>.

<sup>6</sup> Georgia Homelessness Statistics.

<sup>7</sup> The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Opinion: Atlanta's homeless census: enumerating misery on the streets. <https://www.ajc.com/opinion/columnists/opinion-atlantas-homeless-census-enumerating-misery-on-the-streets/RIW5SF3KPVDIHNWV4DIEZGGLLQ/>.



unsheltered homelessness in Atlanta since 2015.<sup>8</sup> Some people declined access to shelters due to the lack of privacy and a fear of catching COVID while housed with many people close together.<sup>9</sup> The pandemic is considered to be a contributing factor in the rise of homelessness generally and of unsheltered homelessness, with many people having less or no work or facing illness.<sup>10</sup> For the City of Atlanta, the following overall trends were found through the [Point in Time Count for 2022](#):

## OVERALL TRENDS

Partners for HOME has implemented housing interventions that have resulted in a 38% reduction in the total population of people experiencing homelessness since 2020, the last year both a sheltered and unsheltered count were taken before the COVID-19 pandemic. The total number of people experiencing homelessness is down 1,223 people since pre-pandemic totals, and down 1,555 people since the adoption of the **ClearPath** strategic plan in 2017.

### TOTAL: People Experiencing Homelessness by Year

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Sheltered	2,891	2,336	2,498	2,301	1,996	1,377
Unsheltered	681	740	719	939	N/A*	640
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,572</b>	<b>3,076</b>	<b>3,217</b>	<b>3,240</b>	<b>N/A*</b>	<b>2,017</b>

\*HUD waived the unsheltered count requirement in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Key findings established in the report include: (1) the rate of homelessness in Atlanta has gone down since 2020; (2) the rate of people experiencing chronic homelessness in emergency shelters decreased in 2022; (3) general use of emergency shelters was low; (4) emergency shelter and transitional housing beds are reduced in Atlanta; and (5) use of beds has been lowered across Atlanta's homeless population.<sup>11</sup>

This chart shows trends for those identifying as having a serious mental illness, substance use disorder, HIV/AIDS, or being survivors of domestic violence:<sup>12</sup>

### TOTAL: People Identifying with Other Characteristics

Characteristic	Emergency	Transitional	Unsheltered	Total	Total Change 2020/2022*
Serious Mental Illness	290	253	197	740	-260
Substance Use Disorder	213	245	181	639	-359
HIV/AIDS	39	66	20	125	-64
Domestic Violence Survivors	33	3	18	54	-44

\*HUD waived the unsheltered count requirement in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

<sup>8</sup> The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Opinion: Atlanta's homeless census: enumerating misery on the streets.

<sup>9</sup> The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, New count of homeless expected to show pandemic has worsened crisis. <https://www.ajc.com/life/health/new-count-of-homeless-expected-to-show-pandemic-has-worsened-crisis/OZUK2J3LZFDA5DDEQDLJRTR7OI/>.

<sup>10</sup> The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, New count of homeless expected to show pandemic has worsened crisis.

<sup>11</sup> 2022 Point-in-Time Count, <https://partnersforhome.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/2022-PIT-Report.pdf>.

<sup>12</sup> 2022 Point-in-Time Count. Some people may be included in one or more categories.

Atlanta residents have expressed concerns about safety issues with encampments set up near their homes and businesses, with some even considering moving away.<sup>13</sup> For more on safety issues within homeless encampments in Atlanta, see [here](#).

### **Populations Most at Risk**

A 2016 nationwide study on homelessness and unsheltered status found that people experiencing unsheltered homelessness are more likely to have chronic health issues and struggles with healthcare access, are at an increased risk of dying prematurely, and frequently have mental illness, cognitive disorders, and substance use disorders.<sup>14</sup>

The study also reported the following on unsheltered homelessness:

“Of the 25,489 survey respondents, 13,761 (54.0%) reported sleeping most frequently in an unsheltered situation. Compared with their sheltered counterparts, unsheltered respondents were more frequently located in areas with warmer temperatures; were male and white or other/mixed race; had a history of military service, incarceration, or foster care; and reported use of drugs and alcohol and treatment related to substance use and mental health. Compared with sheltered respondents, unsheltered respondents were less likely to have more than a high school education and more likely to obtain income through informal sources. Unsheltered respondents reported substantially longer durations of homelessness but less frequent episodes of homelessness than sheltered respondents. Also, compared with sheltered respondents, unsheltered respondents reported higher rates of each high-risk condition measured by the Vulnerability Index, except for frequent hospitalizations, being >60 years of age, and living with HIV/AIDS.”<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Community members say they're concerned about growing homeless population. <https://www.ajc.com/news/community-members-say-theyre-concerned-about-growing-homeless-population/HGAAMR7HHUZNZLPE227DGPHXHM/>.

<sup>14</sup> Homelessness, Unsheltered Status, and Risk Factors for Mortality, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5230839/>.

<sup>15</sup> Homelessness, Unsheltered Status, and Risk Factors for Mortality.

## SUMMARY OF TESTIMONY AND DISCUSSION

### Meeting One – August 4, 2022 (State Capitol)

The Study Committee's first meeting addressed how agencies and organizations are working to combat homelessness, particularly unsheltered homelessness. The following individuals provided testimony:

- Commissioner Christopher Nunn, Georgia Department of Community Affairs;
- Bambie Hayes-Brown, Ph.D, Th.D, President and CEO of Georgia Advancing Communities Together;
- Maxwell Ruppensburg, Director of Supportive Housing at the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities;
- Cathryn Marchman-Vassell, CEO of Partners for Home; and
- Judge Glock, Cicero Institute.

### Commissioner Christopher Nunn, Georgia Department of Community Affairs

Commissioner Nunn testified that DCA is Georgia's state housing agency and that one-tenth of one percent of the state's population is homeless. Based on Point in Time counts, homelessness generally has been declining in Georgia for the past 10 years, with the unsheltered population seeing the greatest decline; however, 2022 numbers have increased.

Commissioner Nunn acknowledged innovative ideas used to address homelessness and noted that they usually work best when they are used to supplement existing programs with proven track records, rather than to replace them. When considering a new idea, leaders must ask what need the solution seeks to solve, if the approach has been tested, and whether the service provider has the experience, sustainability, and funding to be effective.

He stated that the state does not have a direct role and instead provides funding to a network of providers who in turn directly address homelessness. Most homelessness relief efforts are funded and executed at the local level and strongly supported by private investment.

Commissioner Nunn also noted that homelessness is interconnected with various issues, with housing affordability and supply problems at the forefront. State vouchers are distributed using an earned-income model based on rent and need, but the primary challenge facing recipients is that there are not enough landlords to meet the need.

### Bambie Hayes-Brown, Ph.D., Th.D., President and CEO of Georgia Advancing Communities Together

Dr. Hayes-Brown testified about her own experience with homelessness and emphasized the need to lift the voices of those who are or have been homeless. She explained that a person working a minimum wage job would have to work 116 hours per week to be able to afford a two bedroom apartment.

The Peachtree Pine Shelter had issues but served a need, and its closure impacted many people. She advocated for extended stay-hotels, periodic review of agencies disbursing funds, solutions from those who work in the field, low barrier distribution of funds to non-profits,



and ideas and practices that provide actual relief. Additionally, she noted the difficulty of state administrators adding requirements not required by the federal government for funding distribution.

Maxwell Ruppensburg, Director of Supportive Housing at the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities

Mr. Ruppensburg testified about the Office of Supportive Housing's Georgia Housing Voucher Program, which helps people with mental illness and other struggles, and is meant to be the last resort safety net. His office has reduced the wait time for a voucher by 90%, with current wait times under 10 days. Due to a shortage of housing options, however, many of these vouchers are unused.

In an effort to alleviate problems with lack of housing options or landlords not wanting to accept vouchers, the Office of Supportive Housing used additional funds to hire a landlord relations manager and has also instituted a landlord incentive program and a landlord risk mitigation program.

Mr. Ruppensburg noted that supportive housing is cheaper than most other methods of homelessness relief and advocated for the construction of new properties. He also cautioned study committee members to remember that since the state is under DOJ supervision, any changes must consider DOJ requirements.

Cathryn Marchman-Vassell; CEO of Partners for Home

Ms. Vassell testified that the Continuum of Care is a funding stream for homelessness, and Partners for Home is the lead continuum of care agency in Atlanta. Partners for Home works primarily through partner organizations and uses a "housing first" approach. The organization has about 500 units in development, with each unit costing about \$40,000.

Ms. Vassell shared that Atlanta is home to about one-third of Georgia's entire homeless population. There has been a 38% overall reduction in homelessness since 2020, with nearly 600 more households in housing units over the past two years. She stated that Point in Time Counts, while flawed, are conducted in a consistent manner and are mandatory.

Judge Glock, Cicero Institute

Mr. Glock testified that there are about 220,000 unsheltered homeless people in America, and many struggle with mental illness and drug and alcohol abuse. He argued that taking a "housing first" approach does not work as it provides money to those with drug and alcohol addictions, and that the current model of supportive housing is destructive and incentivizes undesirable behavior. He clarified that he does not support the criminalization of homelessness but believes that campers should be moved to shelters, as 50% of shelter beds are unused, and he stated that shelters should lower entry barriers if necessary.

Public Comment

The Study Committee heard from representatives from many organizations who shared how they are working to end unsheltered homelessness, including: River Edge Behavioral Health, the Mayor of Athens, the Southern Poverty Law Action Fund, the United Way Chattahoochee



Valley, Safe House Ministries, members of churches in the Capitol area, Smith Gambrell & Russell, and PAD. Additionally, Mr. Richard DeShields testified about a family tragedy that left him depressed and homeless, and how Partners for Home helped him.

Note that Study Committee members stressed that the criminalization of homelessness was not under consideration. Arrests should only take place under laws already in place that apply to everyone, regardless of housing status.

### **Meeting Two – November 9, 2022 (State Capitol)**

The Study Committee's second meeting focused on testimony from people who have personally experienced unsheltered homelessness.

#### **Public Comment**

Ms. Darlene Adair testified that she was homeless for 20 years and struggled with alcohol and drugs. She supports a housing first approach and is now on the client advisory board of Partners for Home. Ms. Adair runs her own nonprofit, Desire Thy Portion.

Mr. Daniel Page testified that he became homeless later in life after battling health issues that required a six month stay at Grady Hospital. He had previously maintained a successful career in business advertising and sales, but he gradually became more depressed and had a foot infection. Intown Collaborative Ministries helped him find a place to stay. He shared that he is no longer depressed and that it helps to have a roof over your head, and he stated that housing is fully a financial issue for him at this point.

Pastor Maurice Lattimore testified that he was homeless for years due to his criminal history and substance abuse struggles, and that he left prison for the last time in 2008. Crossroad Community was the first place that felt truly "his," and he paid 30% of his income to live in one of their units. Now, he has moved, has his own vehicle, and has rebuilt family relationships. He is the founder of Feet on the Streets Ministry, which runs a mobile shower unit and gives clothes, food, and spiritual direction to those in need.

Ms. Kelly Bryson testified that she was homeless for two years after exiting the military due to post-traumatic stress disorder. She serves on the ATL Youth Action Board and shares about the youth experience with the Continuum of Care.

Ms. Amanda Leppert Gomes testified that she is a Youth Action Board member who experienced homelessness and was briefly unsheltered. She stated that the shelter system is not compassionate and she was able to stop being homeless because she already had a college degree.

Ms. Denice Wade testified about her experience with homelessness after battling substance abuse and mental illness. She now works for Partners for Home and helps to close encampments. Ms. Wade noted the need for affordable housing, expansion of low or no barrier shelters and more day shelters, higher pay for social service workers, and a stronger behavioral health system.

Dr. Keith Slaughter testified that he is a pastor and professor at the Interdenominational Theological Center. His organization renovated a small church into a day shelter open several days a week and also provides food, phone charging stations, and more.

Ms. Sherrell Byrd testified about being a homeless student at Georgia State University and shared information regarding SOWEGA Rising, which is based in Albany. She stated that southwest Georgia is not like Atlanta, as they do not receive the same level of funding to fight homelessness as Atlanta does. Inflation and low wages have contributed to housing insecurity.

Ben Hill County Commissioner Hope Harmon testified that her county has a population of 17,000 people, and 1,700 households make less than \$15,000 in annual income. Ben Hill County's biggest issue is people who are working and sheltered but still homeless, staying with family or in hotels. She noted that there are no homeless shelters within an hour and a half of the county and the nearest behavioral health treatment center is 45 minutes away. Residents waiting on rental assistance will wait six to twelve months only to be rejected, and they have never seen their DCA processor and no longer receive responses from Commissioner Nunn. Since Ben Hill County is small, it is limited in affordable housing options, and people come from Florida to get on multiple affordable housing lists. Most importantly, they never received funding from DCA that was supposed to be allocated to South Georgia. Dekalb County, however, received \$25 million.

Ms. Emily Leppert testified that she was homeless for nine months as a teenager and found the youth shelters to be an abusive system. She is no longer homeless because she was able to find a space to share with her sister.

Dr. Bambie Hayes-Brown testified that she was pregnant and could not find work when the housing industry crashed, and despite having a bachelor's degree and no mental health or substance abuse issues, she and her children became homeless. They remained unsheltered because shelters would not accept her oldest son. They couch surfed, stayed in the office of the job she found, and received community support to get back on their feet. She shared that she still feels anxious about not having a place to stay and works extra jobs for an added safety net. Finally, she noted that the goal should be to end unsheltered homelessness permanently and expressed concern that some nonprofits actually profit from poverty.

Reverend Ferrell Malone testified about homelessness in Waycross and referenced Matthew 25:35, which says "I was a stranger and you took me in." Because Ware County is large geographically, homelessness is not always visible because people camp in the woods and there will sometimes be two to three families sharing a home. He stated that sometimes it is as if South Georgia does not exist, as they are often skipped over when it is time to distribute funding to nonprofits.

Ms. Kelly Saxon from the Greater Valdosta United Way, along with Mr. Michael Smith, echoed issues of funding in South Georgia and stated that there are over 600 homeless students between their two school systems. Although they are based in the 22nd largest county in Georgia, they received 0.5% of the funding allocated for Georgia rental assistance.

**Meeting Three – November 23, 2022 (State Capitol)**

The Study Committee met for a final meeting to discuss its findings and recommendations based on the testimony heard at previous meetings. Members voted upon a draft version of the report and recommendations after significant discussion about removing certain recommendations. However, all recommendations ultimately remained part of the report.

This final version represents what was adopted at the final meeting. Senator Jackson of the 41st, Senator Davenport of the 44th, Judge McClain, and Mr. Robinson voted in favor of passage, while Senator Dugan of the 30th and Senator Robertson of the 29th opposed passage.



## FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the testimony and research presented, the Study Committee on Unsheltered Homelessness makes the following recommendations:

1. Request a comprehensive review of all rules, laws, and department policies for establishing a 501(c)(3) in Georgia within the Georgia Secretary of State's Office, so as to ensure checks and balances protect participants in nonprofits and to guarantee public and private investments made to these organizations are properly accounted for.
2. Require that any state agency or nonprofit receiving state funding and tasked with assisting the unsheltered and sheltered homeless conduct a census of the homeless population each January and August.
3. Conduct a comprehensive audit of all state and federal funding directed to state agencies, especially to eliminate any duplication of state funding related to addressing unsheltered homelessness in Georgia.
4. Conduct a comprehensive audit of all state and federal funding directed to 501(c)(3)s in Georgia to increase transparency in how money is spent and ensure that funds reach the unsheltered homeless population as intended.
5. Seek to fairly allocate funding throughout all counties in Georgia depending on their needs and the size of the homeless population.
6. Recommend an increase in funding to the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities for: (1) mental health services, (2) substance use disorder treatment, and (3) efforts to improve voucher utilization and housing locator services to shorten the waitlist.
7. Recommend that the Department of Community Affairs pay market rates for rent to mitigate unsheltered homelessness and incentivize landlord participation.
8. Increase appropriations to Georgia's Housing Trust Fund for the unsheltered and sheltered homeless and expand current eligible uses.
9. Create a senior leadership role within the Governor's Office charged with driving coordination across public, private, and nonprofit partners impacting housing and unsheltered and sheltered homelessness.
10. Support incentive programs (such as retention bonuses, tuition repayment or waivers, and housing stipends) for those who work with unsheltered people to address staffing shortages and high turnover rates.
11. Protect existing funding streams and make additional investments into nonprofits serving the unsheltered homeless population in Georgia, especially those providing housing resources.
12. Create a funding mechanism to provide operating support for existing Continuum of Care agencies.
13. Create a pathway for unsheltered and sheltered homeless renters to have their eviction records sealed or expunged after three years if necessary.

14. Recommend an increase in funding for housing options for the unsheltered and sheltered homeless in Georgia's budget.
15. When possible, pair new housing funding with support services including mental and physical healthcare services to support housing retention.
16. Insist that every Georgia-born inmate receive a: (1) certified Georgia birth certificate, Georgia ID, or Georgia Driver's license; and (2) a social security card upon release from the Department of Corrections. These documents should be ready 60 days prior to the detainee's anticipated release date. Increase funding to the Department of Corrections to meet this requirement.
  - a. For non-Georgia born inmates: A good faith effort must be made to secure a birth certificate for any non-Georgia born inmate. All inmates, upon release, must have a social security card (when eligible) and a Department of Corrections ID.
17. Make the Department of Corrections ID usable outside of the prison system for the first 60 days upon release. Elevate the DOC ID status so that it can be used to secure other important documents.
18. Create penalties for any law enforcement officer or agency that loses and/or destroys a detainee's legal ID. Make it clear that if a person is arrested with an ID in their possession, then upon release, they will receive that ID. Upon detaining a person, all Georgia arresting agencies must include whether or not the person had an ID with them. If that ID is lost in the course of detaining the person, the law enforcement agency will be responsible for paying the detainee no less than \$32 for the replacement ID or providing a replacement. If the ID cannot be located when it is time for the inmate's release, the inmate must not be detained for additional time just so that the agency has time to replace the ID.
19. Repeal OCGA Section 42-1-15(b) which prohibits sex offenders from residing within 1,000 feet of a child care facility, church, school, or area where minors congregate.
  - a. While to some this proposal may seem politically difficult, there is no data that indicates these requirements enhance public safety but they do create unnecessary homelessness. At any given time there are at least 100 homeless sex offenders in our State, very few of which have committed a predatory offense. It is commonplace for a teenage sex offender to go to prison, be released and then prohibited from residing with his mother and father because their home is too close to a church.
20. Provide free state ID cards for people with a homelessness verification letter. Cap at one free copy every three years.
21. Explore increasing the minimum wage to help eradicate poverty.
22. Permit the establishment of sanctioned encampments on public lands throughout the state where nonprofits, municipalities, and counties are willing to have them.
  - a. Athens, Georgia has established such a program; Douglas County established the first such program and while "Housing First" is a superior solution, this one does achieve results. It is not appropriate for the government to give private property owners the Hobson's choice of either let homeless persons damage and destroy your property, or, we will arrest them for trespass and

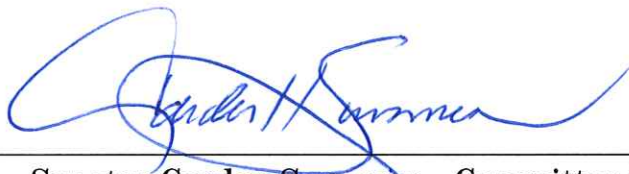
have the taxpayer bear the cost of incarceration. At a sanctioned encampment, the following immediate benefits are obtained: (1) reduction in arrest of homeless, trespass and accumulation of trash and destruction of private property; (2) provision of refuse pickup and basic sanitation and water reducing emergency room visits by homeless persons without access to same; (3) central location to provide food, clothing, basic necessities, relationship building, connection to services; and, (4) in many instances, transition from homelessness to housing due to connection with services.

23. Strengthen shared data management platforms, such as the Homeless Management Information System, for improved collaboration and service delivery among organizations serving unsheltered individuals.
24. Connect veterans facing unsheltered or sheltered homelessness with assistance available at the state and federal level.
25. Continue to convene individuals from across the state who have experienced unsheltered homelessness to help inform future public policy responses on unsheltered homelessness.
26. Continue to oppose the criminalization of homelessness. This Study Committee has not and does not recommend any legal action against unsheltered or sheltered homeless individuals based on housing status. However, law enforcement officers may make arrests for laws already existing and applicable to all individuals regardless of housing status.



Respectfully Submitted,

**FINAL REPORT OF THE SENATE STUDY COMMITTEE  
ON UNSHELTERED HOMELESSNESS (SR 659)**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Carden Summers", is positioned above a horizontal line.

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**Senator Carden Summers – Committee Chairman  
District 13**